This Is Why We Can't Have Nice Things

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This Is Why We Can't Have Nice Things

by amoralagent

Summary

Will felt ruthlessly out of place at another one of Hannibal's extravagant parties with all his pompous guests tittering about opera and the arts. He'd had enough. He decides to take matters into his own hands. Inspired by a dream I had wherein Hannibal gets PUNK'D.

Alternatively, the one where Will throws a crafty tantrum and Hannibal is whipped (figuratively speaking).

"Even Kobbé's guide to the opera, on which generations have relied, involves examples of pianism that anyone could pick out. Even laymen!"

Oh, fuck this.

"Music has to be learned somehow. Only in cases of genii such as Mozart or Mendelssohn can such artistry be learnt at a quick, fastidious rate. I doubt that--"

Oh. *Yeah*. *Fuck this*.

Will is asked a question but doesn't deign it with an answer, instead excusing himself with a little grumble and gesture to the empty glass in his hand, trying and failing to hide his bemused scowl. There's no doubt in his mind that Hannibal has taken his rudeness into account. He couldn't give less of a shit about Hannibal's *delicate sensibilities* right now. Even so, he knows he heard him mumble something in a sigh but didn't make any move to follow him.

As luck would have it, Will managed to step on the train of a bejewelled dress that probably costs more than the bounty on his head. The woman in it gasping as he budges past, almost spilling her champagne.

No. He didn't apologise.

The glamorously niche conversation topics weren't exactly making him feel dumb, but he definitely felt less than up to par when they began gossiping about Stravinsky's legacy and using terms like *sfogato*. Let alone the fucking clothes: it was a haute couturier's wet dream. Eventually, it all became too much.

How his smiles had turned plastery and fleeting spoke volumes. And the way he just raised his eyebrows or nodded instead of vocalising his responses- practically biting his tongue- had shown to just about everybody that he was coming very close to saying something he'd regret. Still, they kept prying and poking until he felt himself swallowing sharp words, his anxious inebriation brimming and threatening to spill in a violent way. Perhaps he'd still have time to embarrass himself after all.

His own dinner suit was a tad too snug- definitely *all* Hannibal's fault- and for the first two hours of the gathering he'd been paraded around like a show pony. A gentle hand at the small of his back whilst Hannibal did all the small talk about them under their *false* identities, and *false* jobs, and *false* stories, never forgetting to near-enough brag about their martial status. He felt like a fucking trophy wife. With backs turned he'd scolded Hannibal in hushed tones, wanting nothing more than to end both their lives with a cocktail stick.

It came as no surprise that he started the night off silently nursing a glass of whiskey, coming close to spitting it back out whenever Hannibal made an indecent comment that only he would catch on to. That whiskey became two. Then three. Four. What can he say, nights like these really test his patience.

Or, honestly, he needs far more liquid courage than most people. Especially on such occasions as these.

Growing fed up, Will navigated his way around the opulent grand foyer, almost treading on several more silk gowns and Italian leather loafers before finding the bar. The cobweb of nerves that laced the pit of his stomach hadn't retreated, chest feeling like a garden box with too much seed. A nauseating sensation lining his spine made him twitch- like any second he'd grab the nearest green bottle and send it smashing into someone's skull if they interrogated him anymore.

When Hannibal had decided on being a host again he'd put it as a *quiet gathering*, assuring Will that they wouldn't be discovered since they'd only settled in near Spoleto less than three months ago, and how different they looked now. Besides, he hadn't done anything like this in *years*.

Will was easily persuaded, especially with the run of a hand through his shaved hair and a chaste kiss to his forehead, then lips. That, and he'd bought him a whole new set of fishing equipment that he didn't need, but certainly loved, and gave him the promise of dogs again- since he had to leave the last small pack in Cuba a couple years back before they left for Nepal; dogs were a pain to travel with. It reminded him, retrospectively, that Hannibal knew all his weak spots as well as Will did his. And that he was overcompensating.

Any lingering doubts were basically erased when he saw Hannibal's long hair crafted into a Viking-like braid. Will might have swooned when he saw him. Might have.

Unfortunately, Hannibal gave *no* inclination as to the sheer number of people attending from inviting half the fucking opera-house apparently- certainly being news to Will. Before he could give him a bollocking for it though, the first gaggle of them arrived adorned in their fanciest trimmings. After the bearable group morphed into twenty people, then nearly double that, Will ended up shaking like a shitting dog.

The whiskey certainly helped. He helped himself to another one.

Hannibal knew how uncomfortable Will was and had done his best to shield him from prying questions and long exchanges, but it did little to save him: plainly, he didn't want to be there anymore. The orchestral music lulled in the background of all the bilingual talking; a welcome, sweet sting hitting the back of Will's throat in time with a crescendo. He gracefully plonked himself down in one of the armchairs stuffed into the corner of the room, settling a few feet from anyone looming, and idly sat listening to backends of conversation before he knew what he was doing.

"Questo vino è abbastanza economico." *Cheap wine? Really? From guest book to recipe book: a novel.* Someone else made a comment about fish and Will's interest briefly piqued until he realised it was about the amuse-bouche instead of the hobby. *More fool me.* Of course people that liked going to the opera, and expensive wine, and Italian weather, and contemporary fashion, wouldn't be caught dead doing something as low and barbaric as *fishing. A darn shame; sushi would've been great*. His mind flipped over like a deck of cards shuffling, and he thinks of Abigail. When he gets drunk he often does. His throat clicks when he swallows.

Another whiff of semi-whispered squabbling found him eavesdropping into a disagreement regarding one of them stating "*I think you'd be surprised at how much food I can shovel into my mouth without being told to stop*." He zoned out of it rather quickly with a tiny hope they'd fall to having to prove that point with Hannibal's cooking, then opting back to the hushed music. Will sighed, loudly, and swirled the dregs of the almond-flavoured liqueur in his tumbler.

Suddenly struck with a brilliant idea, he downed the last of his drink, left the glass on the table, and straightened his jacket as he stood. Admittedly, he was on the road to stumbling rather than walking but this time he got to the stairs just fine. Hannibal presumed he was going to use the bathroom and carried on talking, but he assumed awfully wrong. And what do you do when you assume, as Jack Crawford so eloquently put it?

"You make an *ASS* out of *U* and *ME*."

Will's brain swam in his head, gripping onto the banister for dear life on his way upstairs, a wicked grin finding it's way to his lips as he fell into the room and pushed the door shut behind him. Lucky for him, Hannibal hadn't locked the door. *Score*. He swivelled in the chair for a few moments, hands hovering over the screen that controlled the swell of music drifting so wonderfully throughout the building.

It would be a shame if, y'know, something were to happen to it.

He paused, musing over his options as indecisiveness clouded his alcohol soddened mind. Sniffing a laugh, he poked at the technology until he found what he was looking for: a song that Hannibal had jokingly shown Will purely to mock him- suggesting he sings it all the time during sex. It certainly made him laugh, until he kissed the smugness straight of the man's face and proved him right. He hesitated for only a brief moment before clicking on it.

Schulhoff's *Sonata Erotica* began playing. Loud.

It only took seconds for the audience of guests to quieten slightly, then he heard the predictable gasps of disgust or shock, some laughing. Murmuring in either recognition or bewilderment. Will let his head lull back against his chair and loosened his tie and shirt buttons with uncoordinated fingers, scratching his stubbled jaw. He could practically smell Hannibal's exasperation from there, appearing in the form of a heat moving up to his ears hidden by his hair.

Surprisingly, he didn't storm up the stairs and pounce on Will like he's imagined. Instead, he settled on a charming grin to disarm any of the guests snapping their heads in his direction and sipped on his wine like nothing was awry. Why would he panic? He's Hannibal Lecter. Will frowned.

Seemingly choosing to be unbothered, the guest defaulted back to continuing their discussions, most of them desperately trying to block out the panoply of moaning. Hannibal was approached by an unsettled man who willed him to stop the music, but he only tipped his glass towards him and made an insulting comment like *it would surely be offensive if you have struggled to achieve such responses in your own escapades*, to which the man turned away, vexed.

Decisively, Will turned the volume up even louder.

Then, one of Hannibal's giggling elderly museum colleagues suggested he *go and see what's going on up there*, so he simply cracked a smile and went to do just that. Will instantly recognised the click of footsteps up the marble staircase, not stopping before they strides straight into the room and stilled in front of a blushing, drunk Will Graham. He was smiling ear to ear, wolfishly.

With an unjustly calm manner, Hannibal moved directly in front of Will, inches from his seated form, to quickly change the music. Will looked up at him with the best look of innocence he could muster, grin deceiving. He could feel Hannibal's annoyance like waves lapping at a shore: "Are you going to *threaten* me now? Will I *regret* having my little *tantrum*?" Will asked, feigning utter disinterest but licking his lips when Hannibal met his gaze.

"No. But if your misbehaviour continues, you will." Hannibal turned to him re-buttoning his jacket, a soft adoration blooming in his eyes: "I understand you find these kind of social events difficult, Will, and I promise I will up an end to it soon." Will scoffed so hard he could've choked.

"You said that an hour ago."

"I wasn't roped into conversation an hour ago."

"You're perfectly capable of untangling yourself from them." Will smiled lopsidedly, knowing exactly which buttons to press: "You're *the* Hannibal Lecter."

"Not tonight, I'm not." Will blanked and rolled his eyes away from him.

"Oh, right- I'm sorry *Professor Rowe*, hey, instead of-- passive aggression, you punish me like a schoolboy, how about that? Let all your little opera friends hear?" Will chided, giving a glare of a warning, disappointment rife.

They both knew that on any other night all the embarrassment he'd caused would've been enough to rile Hannibal up. Will knew that slight crease in his brow and the way his broad shoulders arched, strength coiled and caged in a tailored suit, pushing at the seams. Under a different moon, Will would've had fingers pushed into his mouth, be thrown onto the nearest piece of furniture and put right back in his place between growled words and hot palms, but *no*. Hannibal just signed passably and regarded Will with what he viewed as a new species of benign irritation. He seemed nothing more than inconvenienced.

"I suggest you don't have anymore to drink," He suddenly leaned over Will clapping both his hands on the arms of the chair, Will then finding actual anger in his features, "I'd hate for our guests to think of you as being so... *uncouth*."

Will moved to be inches from Hannibal's face, goading, steadied and made powerful by the whiskey in his veins: "You fucking *love it*." He purred, "And I have an idea." He punctuated his words with a quick, biting kiss, earning naught but a curious hum as a reaction, "In half an hour, I'm coming downstairs naked." He giggled lowly when Hannibal's mouth twitched at

a snarl, dark and possessive, "Get rid of *everyone* by then." Will fell back in his chair, the wide grin having returned; gently flushed cheeks and dark eyes enthralling. Hannibal only blinked, the only hint of expression in the crinkles denting the edges of his eyes, rapt: "Or face the consequences."

"I highly doubt your ability to find the stairs, let alone descend them."

"Love will find a way." He quipped, giggling, snatching hold of the man's lapels and pulling them towards him to greedily taste the wine on his lips and tongue before shoving him away.

Hannibal's hand came up to scratch lightly at Will's scalp, towering over him, and carded a hand through the short hair, humming again: "*Insolent* boy." He cooed, fingers trailing down his cheek to his jaw, where Will bought his thumb into his mouth, chuckling.

"Call me a boy again and you'll lose more than your thumb." Will spoke around it, teeth scraping carefully as Hannibal removed it. Will made no effort to keep him there, hands fiddling with the peeling fabric of the chair instead whilst Hannibal straightened himself out yet again.

Hannibal made to leave, just as composed as he came in spare the pinker lips, but Will changed his mind: "Hang on-- come back here."

"You've had your fun, Will." He didn't even look over his shoulder when he said it and Will threw himself up after him, gripping him by the shoulder and slamming him back into the door without so much as a flinch. Hannibal didn't make any move, didn't go to grab him back, only meeting his fiery stare with a hint of a smile. He wondered if the guest heard the thud of his back against wood.

Will crowded him and pinned him with his weight, hands holding his jaw and tie with a thumb under his chin pushing up hard enough to hurt and tie pulling down, exposing the line of his throat. Both were somewhat surprised that he'd managed that amount of coordination. Hannibal's lick of his bottom lip opened into a smile, cruel and controlled.

"*Fun?*" Will spat in a whisper, voice gritty and low, spoken against Hannibal's jaw: "My idea of *fun* isn't watching purebreds bicker about which Beethoven piece is their favourite-- and watching them touch you." Hannibal twisted a hand up to Will's nape and held it there, closing his eyes against the feeling of warm breath and the drag of lips on his neck and Will's scent, alcohol, and angst, and anger.

"You're not jealous, are you?" Hannibal smiled enough to show his teeth, fang-like and canine.

"Jealous?" He scoffed again, dropping his head to Hannibal's shoulder but not loosening his grip at all, "When I'm jealous, you don't need to ask." That was curtly followed by a jolting bite to where his neck meets his shoulder, not hard enough to break skin.

"Why does their physical contact with me offend you? You have no reason to worry about such formalities." He was speaking very well for someone whose neck was being painted livid reds and purples by courtesy of Will's own teeth, slick with spit.

"I don't *worry*-- All these people-- adore you. Even if they don't-- they're still desperate for your attention." Will sighed kissing the bruises softly now, "They're all just *desperate* for your attention."

"Not as desperate as you, it seems."

Will came up to his cheekbone and tested the bone under his lips, "Hardly. I always have your attention." He let go of the tie, strong hand moving up to cup his jaw and pull him close. Hannibal opened his eyes narrowly, meeting the mirth and wide pupils of Will's eyes with a lingering smile, watching his eyebrows raise: "I always will." He said, matter-of-factly, then finally kissing him, once, aggressive.

Taking into account the amount of whiskey he'd ingested, Hannibal was intrigued by how he was managing coherent thought- he'd seen Will drink this much and he'd be on the floor or half in his lap slurring about sociological theories and his favourite kind of beetles.

Or, when drunk, he'd burst back into the house with someone else's blood on his clothes. Sometimes he'd be on Hannibal in a matter of seconds- making punishable use of the rug in the lounge or his favourite armchair; never making it to the bedroom. That, or Hannibal had to stop him from killing them both in the process.

One time, they narrowly avoided a mounted stag's skull causing a different kind of penetration in his chest cavity, *thank fuck*. On the other hand, would've been a symmetrically ironic end.

"Besides, you're stuck with me." Will shrugged, one-sided, smiling then, in a prideful way.

"Mutual commitment isn't something that you can make happen. It happens to you, the same way forgiveness does." Will squinted at him, finding it difficult to understand that fully in his drunken state. A limp raise of a hand got his ring catching in the light. Will laughed, looking back at Hannibal from his hand.

"Marriage is too *human* for you. It's just to appear as such."

"We're symbiotic."

"We're cannibals."

Hannibal looked far less together now, but still straightened his tie halfheartedly and huffed: "As charming as that is, I'm afraid I need to *get rid* of our guests before you flash them all." Will warned off a smile and plopped himself back down, leather creaking sadly under him, "We'll discuss this later."

He pretended to look at a watch he wasn't wearing: "Twenty minutes and counting." Resting his head to the side, he eyed Hannibal with suspicion and unbridled desire, working one hand to take off his belt: "No point in trying to cover them up."

Hannibal harrumphed, looking from the mirror to a stoned Will Graham, idolatrous and beaming, "I do hope they appreciate my work." Hannibal turned away, hearing his husband's

giggles, and twisted the door handle.

"Laugh now, mano miele. You won't be doing so for much longer." His smile was only implied in his eyes when he half-turned back to him, leaving.

Before he closed the door behind him, Will oohed, chucking. Then, "I'm counting on it."

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